

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 30, 2005. Claims 126 to 147 are in the application. Claims 126, 136, 146 and 147 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 126 to 147 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over "Pad: An Alternative Approach to the Computer Interface" (Perlin) in view of "Developing Calendar Visualizers for the Information Visualizer" (Mackinlay). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Referring specifically to the claims, independent Claim 126 defines a hierarchical data display method of displaying hierarchically-managed data items. The method comprises setting in a background indicating a hierarchical level, a first area in which data item(s) belonging to a parent hierarchical level is displayed and a second area in which data item(s) belonging to a child hierarchical level is displayed, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other in a display area of every hierarchical level. The method also comprises controlling a display of data icons respectively representing the data items in each of the areas.

Independent Claims 136, 146 and 147 are directed to an apparatus, a program executable by a computer, and a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 126.

The applied references are not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of independent Claims 126, 136, 146 and 147, and in particular, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of setting in a background indicating a hierarchical level, a first

area in which data item(s) belonging to a parent hierarchical level is displayed and a second area in which data item(s) belonging to a child hierarchical level is displayed, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other in a display area of every hierarchical level.

In contrast, Perlin is seen to describe “an infinite two dimensional information plane,” similar in concept to a “typical bulletin board or whiteboard.” (sections 1.2 and 1 of Perlin). On the two dimensional plane, “Pad Objects are organized geographically; every object occupies a well defined region on the Pad surface.” (section 1.2). A user can view the entire surface, or zoom in to a particular Pad Object on the surface using a “portals” that are “like magnifying glasses that can peer into and roam over different parts of the Pad Surface.” (Id.)

Contrary to the Office Action’s assertion, Perlin’s “two dimensional information plane” populated by Pad Objects on the surface is not seen to disclose or to suggest hierarchical levels at all. Rather, Perlin discloses that the Pad Objects are “organized geographically” on the surface of the Pad. (section 1.2). Furthermore, while Perlin discloses using “portals” to zoom in to view a particular Pad Object on the surface, Perlin’s zooming is seen merely show “different types of information about that object” as the user zooms in. (section 1.3). For example, “when a text document is small on the screen the user may only want to see its title. As the object is magnified, this may be augmented by a short summary or outline. At some point the entire text is revealed.” (Id.) Accordingly, Perlin’s viewing different information about a particular Pad Object on the Pad surface while zooming is not seen to disclose or to suggest hierarchical levels, much

less disclose or suggest setting in a background indicating a hierarchical level, a first area in which data item(s) belonging to a parent hierarchical level is displayed and a second area in which data item(s) belonging to a child hierarchical level is displayed, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other in a display area of every hierarchical level.

The remaining reference, namely Mackinlay, is not seen to cure the deficiencies of Perlin. Specifically, while Mackinlay might disclose viewing calendar data for a particular date along with, for example, the month and year for which the calendar data is associated, Mackinlay is not seen to disclose or to suggest setting in a background indicating a hierarchical level, a first area in which data item(s) belonging to a parent hierarchical level is displayed and a second area in which data item(s) belonging to a child hierarchical level is displayed, so that the first and second areas are displayed exclusively and without overlapping each other in a display area of every hierarchical level.

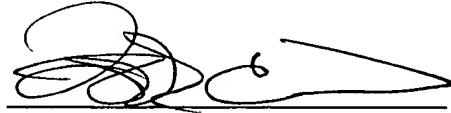
Accordingly, independent Claims 126, 136, 146 and 147 are believed to be allowable.

The other claims in the application are dependent from the independent claims discussed above and therefore are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', written over a horizontal line.

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